UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/24996
21 December 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 18 DECEMBER 1992 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to address you, and through you the members of the Security Council, about the situation in Angola.

On 30 November 1992 the Security Council adopted resolution 793 (1992) by which it requested me to submit by 31 January 1993 my longer-term recommendations for the future role of the United Nations in the peace process in Angola. I regret to have to report to the Council that since that date there has been little or no progress in putting the peace process back on track. Unless there is a rapid improvement in this state of affairs, it is difficult to believe that by the end of next month conditions will exist for me to recommend to the Security Council that it authorize the enlarged United Nations presence in Angola which both sides say they want.

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 793 (1992) had been preceded by a favourable development. Four days before, on 26 November, senior delegations from the two sides had met under UNAVEM auspices in Namibe, the first such meeting since the tragic events of 31 October/1 November in Luanda and elsewhere. The atmosphere of that meeting was good and the two sides agreed on a declaration in which they pledged themselves to full acceptance of the validity of the Bicesse Accords, to an effective cease-fire throughout the country and the immediate cessation of all offensive movements, and to the need for a larger United Nations involvement. It was intended to resume the meeting a few days later.

However, this progress received an almost immediate setback when, on 29 November, UNITA forces took the northern cities of Uige and Negage, the latter being the site of an important airbase. As the members of the Council are aware, a United Nations police observer died in the cross-fire in Uige. Since then all attempts to restore a dialogue between the two sides have failed. UNITA forces were largely, but not entirely, withdrawn from Uige and Negage on 4 December, after strenuous efforts by UNAVEM II. But UNITA forces continue to occupy up to two-thirds of the municipalities in Angola, which the Government administration has had to leave or has been expelled. There is disturbing evidence that both sides are continuing their preparations for a

resumption of war on a large scale, and the Government's public statements speak openly of this possibility. In recent days, however, there has been a welcome reduction in the frequency of armed clashes.

On the political front, the Government announced, on 2 December, the formation of a Government of National Unity headed by Mr. Marcolino Moco, formerly Secretary-General of the governing party. The Government consists of 27 ministers and state secretaries. Of these 27 posts, one (Minister of Cultural Affairs) was offered to UNITA, together with four vice-ministerial posts (defence, agriculture, public works and social assistance). One ministerial post and six lesser positions were offered to other parties which had won seats in the new Assembly.

At a meeting of the Permanent Committee of its Political Commission on 8 and 9 December, UNITA decided to take up its seats in the Assembly and to nominate persons to occupy the posts which it had been offered in the Government. UNITA also decided to return its Generals to the structures of the new Angolan Armed Forces (FAA), from which they had withdrawn shortly after the elections of 29/30 September. These were positive moves which raised hopes that a political dialogue could be resumed and agreement be reached on a programme of action to complete the implementation of the Bicesse Accords.

Unfortunately, those hopes have not yet been fulfilled. Recriminations continue between the two sides on a variety of issues: the situation in Uige and Negage; UNITA's refusal to withdraw its troops and its resistance to the restoration of Government administration in municipalities which it has seized since the elections; the release of persons held by each side, in particular the senior UNITA personalities living "under Government protection" in Luanda; the exchange of bodies of those killed in the recent fighting; and mutual accusations of preparations for war.

A further obstacle to progress is UNITA's legitimate concern about the security of its members in Luanda and other government-controlled parts of the country. This is a matter for which both sides would like the United Nations to assume responsibility. While it would be difficult for the United Nations to do so directly, a number of ideas have been offered to the two sides and, if certain conditions were fulfilled, I would be ready to seek the Council's authority to make some United Nations military personnel available, on a temporary basis, to facilitate the return to Luanda of Dr. Savimbi, the UNITA members of the new Government and the UNITA members of the elected Assembly. I have accordingly instructed my Special Representative to try to engage the two sides in discussions of practical arrangements which would be acceptable to both of them and which I could recommend to the Council.

Both sides have recently conveyed to my Special Representative their ideas about the role which they would like the United Nations to play in future. Both agree in principle on the need to enlarge UNAVEM II's mandate and increase its strength on the ground, including the provision of armed troops. However, differences exist between them, especially on the extent to which UNAVEM II should in future exercise a good offices or mediatory

function, and the extent to which it should be involved in the organization and conduct of the second round of presidential elections.

I have continued to maintain the position that I would be ready to recommend to the Security Council that it authorize a larger mandate and strength for UNAVEM II but that I could only do this if the two sides had demonstrated their continuing commitment to the Bicesse Accords by agreeing on a realistic plan of action to get the implementation process back on track. As will be evident from this letter, they have so far failed to satisfy these conditions.

In these circumstances, I decided to telephone President dos Santos and Dr. Savimbi on 12 December and ask them to meet together, under my auspices and in my presence, in Geneva during the last week of December in order to make a determined effort to move forward. President dos Santos said, as he has said before, that he would be willing to meet Dr. Savimbi, but that the meeting would have to take place in Angola's capital city, Luanda. Dr. Savimbi expressed readiness to attend a meeting in Geneva as I had proposed. In my conversation with President dos Santos, I expressed understanding of the reasons which had so far led him to insist on a meeting in Luanda. But I urged him to take into account the critical situation in his country and the danger that unless the two sides produce early evidence of their willingness and ability to work together to implement the Bicesse Accords, the international community will no longer feel justified in committing scarce resources to the continuation of the United Nations operation in Angola on its present scale.

I have thought it right, Mr. President, to bring this worrying situation to the Security Council's attention now and not wait until the report which I am required to provide towards the end of next month. I would value any support which the Council might wish to give to my efforts, perhaps in the form of an appeal to both leaders to accept my invitation to a joint meeting in Geneva or, if this were preferred, in another United Nations location such as Addis Ababa.

I should be grateful if you would bring these matters to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI